

**West Plano Pediatrics**  
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## **Two Week Check-up Advice**

### **Next Visit: Two Months**

**Diet--Breastmilk** or infant formula is the only food required by babies in the first several months. If you are breastfeeding, we recommend exclusively feeding breastmilk for the first 5-6 wk to establish and maintain an ample milk supply. If your baby is bottlefed, make sure that you are mixing formula correctly every time. You should be feeding your baby on-demand, but you should recognize that not all crying is due to hunger. If your baby seems hungry “all the time”, tune in to her crying and try other ways to comfort her before feeding. It is possible for a baby this age to eat too much! Your baby should be back to her birthweight by this visit. Most babies will gain about one ounce per day during the next few months.

**Development--**Most of your baby’s development in the next few weeks will be social. She is making a place for herself in the family and learning to communicate with you. You may notice that she moves her arms and legs in rhythm with your voice, that she recognizes her mother’s smell, and that she prefers human faces to other images. When your baby is most receptive, she will slow to the sound of your voice, open her hands or move her mouth. If she is unhappy or overstimulated, she may arch her back, tense her muscles or jitter. These are your cues to hold her quietly and not overstimulate her. You will also learn her different types of crying--hungry, fussy, sleepy, pain, etc. Your baby is likely to start smiling soon--first as a reflex to your face, then in an attempt to make you smile at her. Over the next few weeks, your baby needs mostly to be held, rocked, cuddled, spoken to and sung to. Lots of **close physical contact** will teach her that she is safe and loved, and these feelings set the stage for later social development.

**Sleep--**Your baby is probably sleeping a lot now. The patterns are random at this age, and the baby may sleep only 2 or 3 hr at a time or as long as 8 hr. As she matures in the next few months, you will notice that her sleep periods get longer and begin to cluster in the night. This is called “**settling in**”, and it is complete around 3 mo. Giving your baby rice cereal with her breastmilk or formula will not make her settle in faster, and early introduction of solids can lead to obesity later. Your baby should be placed on their back to sleep, even during the daytime. This simple step helps to prevent Sudden Infant Death Syndrome or SIDS.

**Crying--**Crying is your baby’s most effective way to communicate and blow off steam. Most parents notice that their babies have an increase in their crying time around 2 wk of age. This usually increases from 1 hr to about 3 hr a day at 6 wk of age. The length of crying then diminishes again to about 1hr/day by 3 mo. Crying is usually worst in the late afternoon and early evening, possibly because, like adults, babies have problems coping at the end of a long day.

**Colic** is an exaggeration of the normal increase in crying at this age. Colic is defined as excessive crying in an **otherwise healthy baby** between 2 wk and 3 mo of age. The cause of colic is unknown, but it goes away as the baby matures and learns to cope and express herself. Formula or lactose intolerance are really quite rare and changing formula rarely helps a colicky baby. There are a few things you can try to help your baby.

1. Hold her for at least one hour of quiet time (when she's not crying) every day. When she's crying, pick her up and try to console her right away.

2. During colicky times, hold her for 30 min. If she's still crying, put her in her crib and let her cry for a while. This will give both of you a break. If she's still crying after 15 min, try picking her up again.

3. Teach her to suck her thumb or a pacifier. Show her a mirror or mobile.

4. Many babies respond to gentle rocking or "white noise". An infant swing or a car ride may help. Try putting her in an infant seat on top of the clothes dryer, making sure she doesn't fall off. Some babies like the sound of the vacuum cleaner. If your mother or friends have any suggestions, try them. Just make sure the baby is safe from falls. If you have questions, call the office.

5. If you are getting too stressed out, have someone else take care of the baby for a few hours and get out of the house. Caring for a colicky baby is very frustrating and you need to preserve your sanity! Infants with colic should gain weight, develop normally and have normal quiet alert periods during the day. If your crying baby has diarrhea, vomiting, fever, blood in her stools or appears sick, your baby may not have colic, and you should call us right away. The good news about colic is that it does disappear with time and colicky babies do not necessarily become difficult or ill-behaved children.

**Siblings**--Your older children are sure to have some behavior changes in response to the new baby's arrival. **Sibling rivalry** occurs at all ages and in fact shows that the older child has formed a healthy attachment to his parents. Many toddlers show **aggression** toward the new baby or toward the parents, and may have some **regression**--she may want to wear diapers or be carried. "**Naughtiness**" or a disregard for established rules is very common, as is apathy toward the new baby and mother. Some children will become **excessively sweet** or helpful. Although this may seem very pleasant, make sure that she isn't hiding her feelings for fear of losing you. This can be a time for your older child to broaden her **social skills**. She may learn how to be more independent in dressing and feeding or may want to help with the new baby. Children learn a lot from a relationship with a sibling. Be sure to have special time alone with your older child. Encourage some increase in **independence**, but allow her to regress some if she needs to. Let her help some with the baby or parallel you by caring for a doll. You should try to minimize changes in her life and routine when possible. Allow her to displace her aggression onto stuffed animals or Nerf balls. Never leave a toddler alone with your new baby.

**Extended Family**--Your family can be a big help with cooking and cleaning and really take a burden off of the new parents. If, however, you find yourself resenting the help or feeling like you are not in control in your own house, it is time to let them know. Your family will have many years to get to know your new baby, and you need time to reorganize your life and your relationships with your spouse and your older children.